

***Mt. Moriah* – God's Ultimate Test of Obedience for Abraham**

Genesis 22:2-4

² And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

³ And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

⁴ Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.

2 Chronicles 3:1

³ Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem in mount Moriah, where the Lord appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite.



ABRAHAM OFFERS UP ISAAC.

Mt. Moriah – God's Ultimate Test of Obedience for Abraham

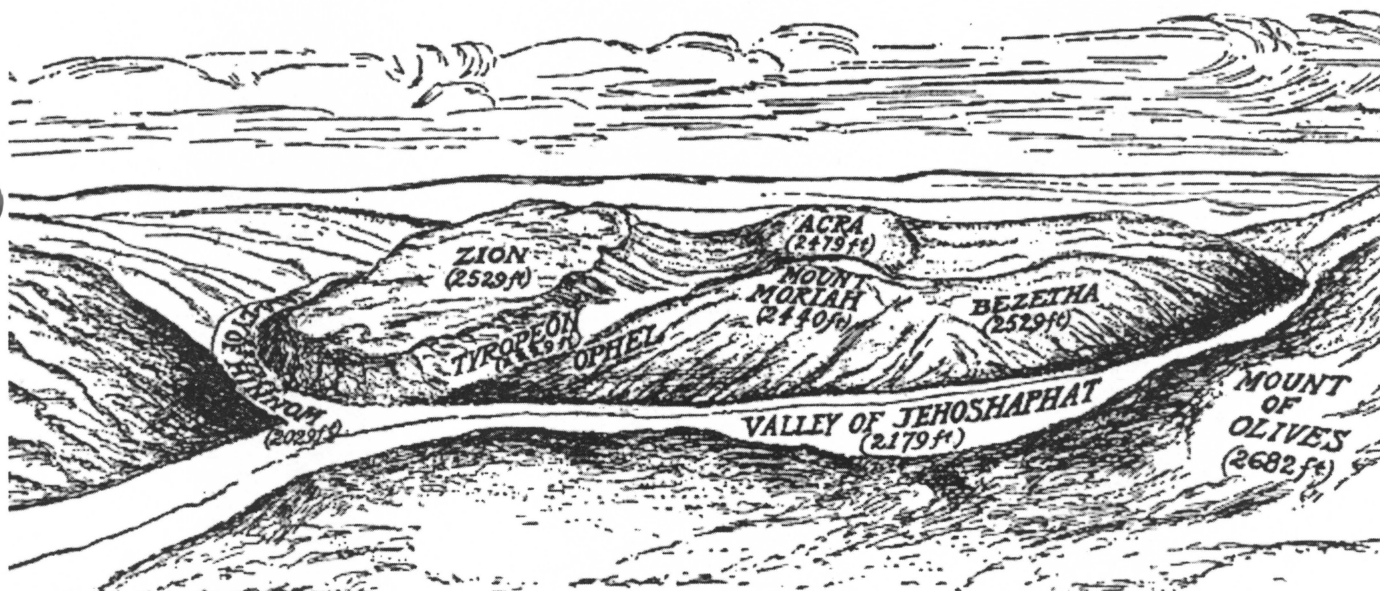
1A. THE TERRAIN AROUND JERUSALEM:

1b. Geography:

The city of Jerusalem rests on a limestone plateau 2500 feet above sea level. It is located in the central hill country, and is near the border of the Judean desert. It is far removed from any major trade routes. On the west side of Jerusalem are the Judean mountains, on the east side is the Judean desert which descends 4000 feet in 10 miles at the Dead Sea. The rugged terrain of Jerusalem was a definite military advantage, it was easy to defend because the city can only be reached on its northern side. The east, west, and southern sides had steep valleys.

2b. Jerusalem's Four Hills

Ps. 87:1 "His foundation is in the holy mountains."



Jerusalem rests upon four hills or mountains, but only two of them have biblical names, Mount Zion and Mount Moriah. Between these mountains there is a large valley that the Romans called the Tyropoean. Mount Zion was referred to geographically as the southwestern hill of Jerusalem. But Zion has much greater significance in the Bible and it is frequently mentioned as the place of the Temple and of the King. When David said that he would not rest until he "has found out a place for the Lord, a habitation for the mighty God of Jacob," the Lord replied with this Scripture:

Ps. 132:13-14 "For the LORD has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His dwelling place: 'This is My resting place forever; Here I will dwell, for I have desired it.'"

2A. THE TOPOGRAPHY OF JERUSALEM:

1b. Jerusalem's Valleys:

Jerusalem was surrounded on the west, south, and east by deep ravines the which are 200-400 feet deep and therefore made it impossible for an enemy to attack from either these directions. Therefore Herod's Jerusalem was considered unapproachable, except from the north side which was actually protected by the outermost wall which was over 100 feet high and had 90 towers according to Josephus.

The deep valley on the west and the southwest side of the city was called the valley of Hinnom (the abhorred place).

The deep valley on the east side of the city was called the valley of the Kidron, or Jehoshaphat, where the prophet Joel saw a futuristic vision where the nations of the world would be summoned for judgment. The place where these ravines met was called "Enrogel" or "The Well of Joab" (2 Sam. 17:17).

These deep valleys made the inhabitants of Jerusalem to feel safe and secure, as though God Himself were protecting it. It was so secure from an enemy attack that Titus, the Roman General who conquered Jerusalem in 70 A.D. said that "if it had not been for the internal dissensions, the city could never have been taken."

- 1c. **The Kidron Valley** also called the Valley of Jehoshaphat formed the eastern boundary of the city of Jerusalem and separation of Mount Zion from the Mount of Olives. The Bible also refers to the Kidron Valley as the King's Dale (2 Sam. 18:18).
- 2c. **The Tyropoean Valley** also called the Valley of the Cheese Makers, joins the Kidron Valley on the south side of Mount Moriah and runs to the north between Mount Zion and Mount Moriah. The Tyropoean Valley separates at the north part causing a fork and Mount Acra is located between the forks.
- 3c. **The Hinnom Valley** created a western and southern boundary for the city of Jerusalem. The southern part of the Valley of Hinnom was called Gehenna or Tophet, "the place of fire" (Jeremiah 7:31). It was here in the Valley of Hinnom that Moloch was worshipped and therefore later became a garbage heap during the first century A.D.

2b. Jerusalem's Mountains:

- 1c. **Mount Moriah** is the mount on which Abraham was to offer Isaac in Genesis 22. In 1 Chronicles 21 it is identified as the location of Arunah (or, Oman) the Jebusite threshing floor that David bought for 600 shekels of gold. This purchase is an important fact since it demonstrates that the Jews received this area through a legal transaction. They have never sold the rights to Mount Moriah.

King David said to Oman, "No, but I will buy them for the full price. I will not take for the Lord what is yours, nor offer burnt offerings that cost me nothing." So David paid Oman 600 shekels of gold by weight for the site. And David built there an altar to the Lord and presented burnt offerings – 1 Chronicles 21:24,25.

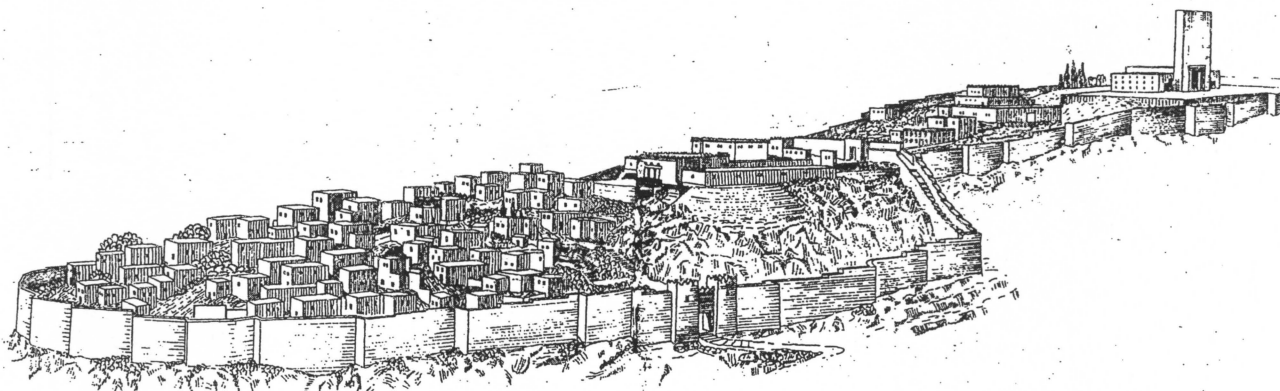
Mount Moriah is where Solomon built the Temple:

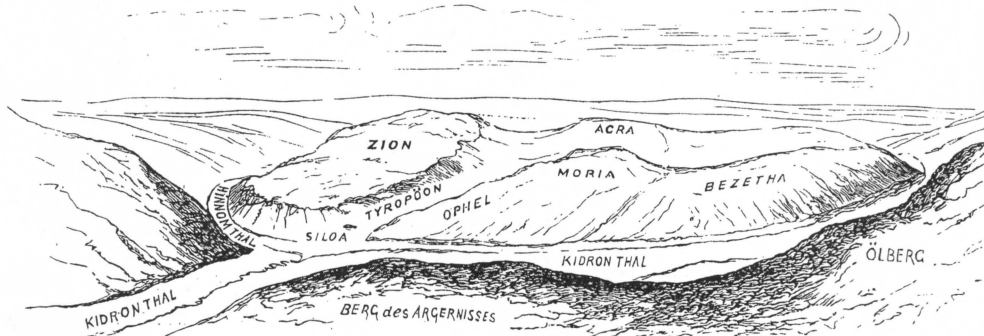
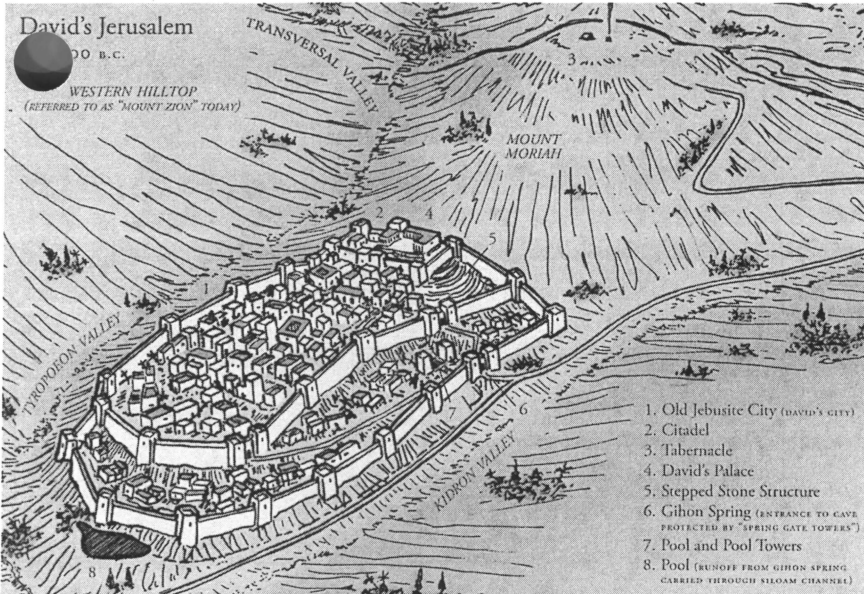
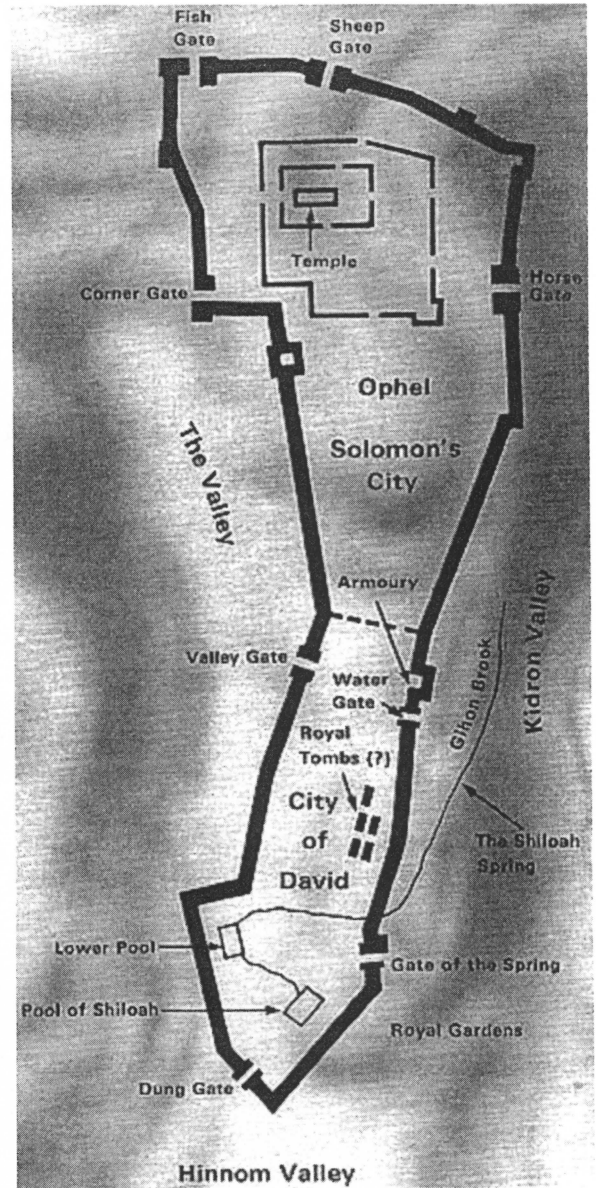
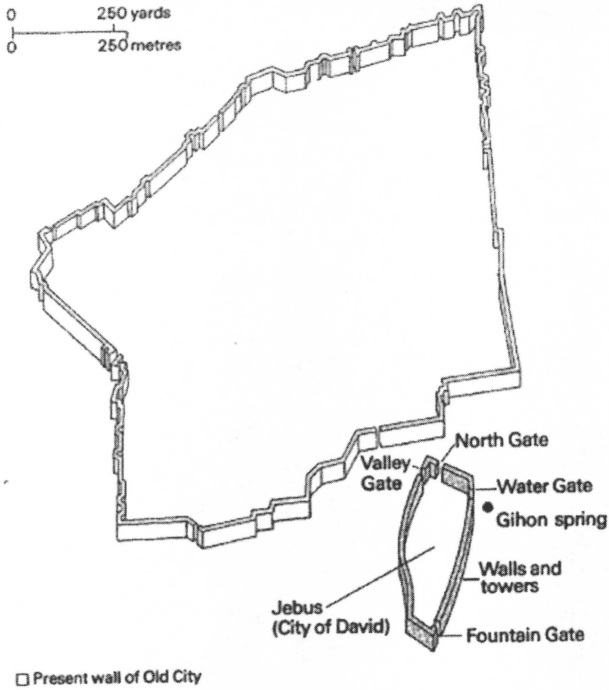
Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the Lord had appeared to David his father, at the place that David had appointed on the threshing floor of Oman the Jebusite – 2 Chronicles 3:1.

- 2c. **Mount Zion** is the largest of the hills in Jerusalem. It stands 2,550 feet high. Mount Zion is mentioned throughout the Old Testament but only once in the New Testament (Rev. 14:1). Mount Zion is located on the southwest side of Jerusalem between the Tyropoeon Valley and the Hinnom Valley and this is the location of the Upper City where the wealthy lived during the time of Jesus. This is also the hill where the Jebusites built a stronghold but were eventually conquered by David. David built his palace here on Mount Zion; it became the palace and home for the kings of Israel. David and most of his successors (14) were buried on Mount Zion (1 Ki. 2:10; 9:43; 14:31).
- 3c. **Mount Acra** is located in Jerusalem on the north side of Mount Zion between the Tyropoeon Valley and the Hinnom Valley. It is interesting that Simon Maccabeus nearly filled up the Tyropoeon Valley which is located between Mount Bezetha and Mount Acra. He slo reduced the height of Mount Acra in order to make it lower than Mount Moriah where the Temple stood. Antiochus Epiphanes, ruler of the Seleucid Empire, built a fortress in Jerusalem on Mount Acra after he conquered the city in 168 B.C. It was here that the Syrians governed the Jews. Later this fortified compound was destroyed by Simon Maccabeus. Mount Acra was important in the Maccabean Revolt and the formation of the Hasmonean Kingdom.
- 4c. **Mount Bezetha** is located in Jerusalem west of Acra and in the first century it was north of the Antonia fortress. Mount Bezetha was not included in the city of Jerusalem until the first century after the third wall was built, and therefore received the name "New City."

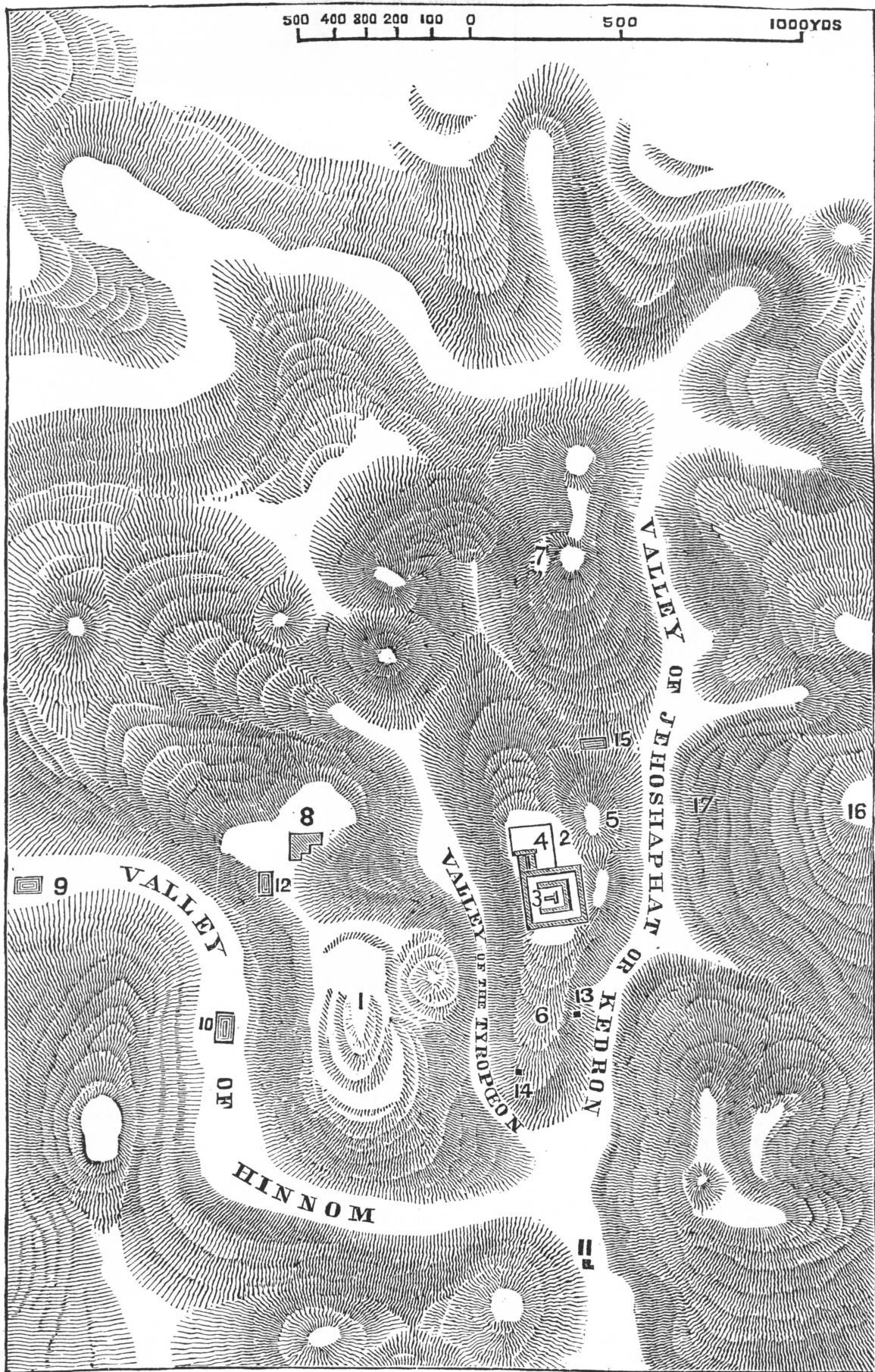
Adapted from http://www.bible-history.com/jerusalem/firstcenturyjerusalem_the_land_of_jerusalem.html (accessed August 22, 2012)

- 3b. The changes in the Temple Mount:





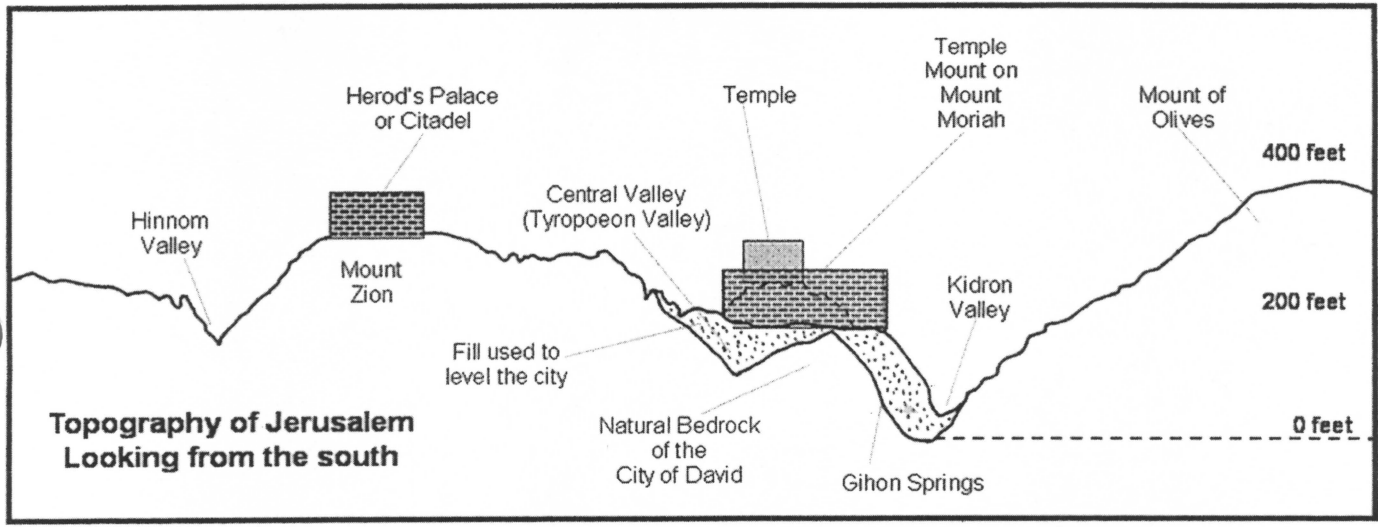
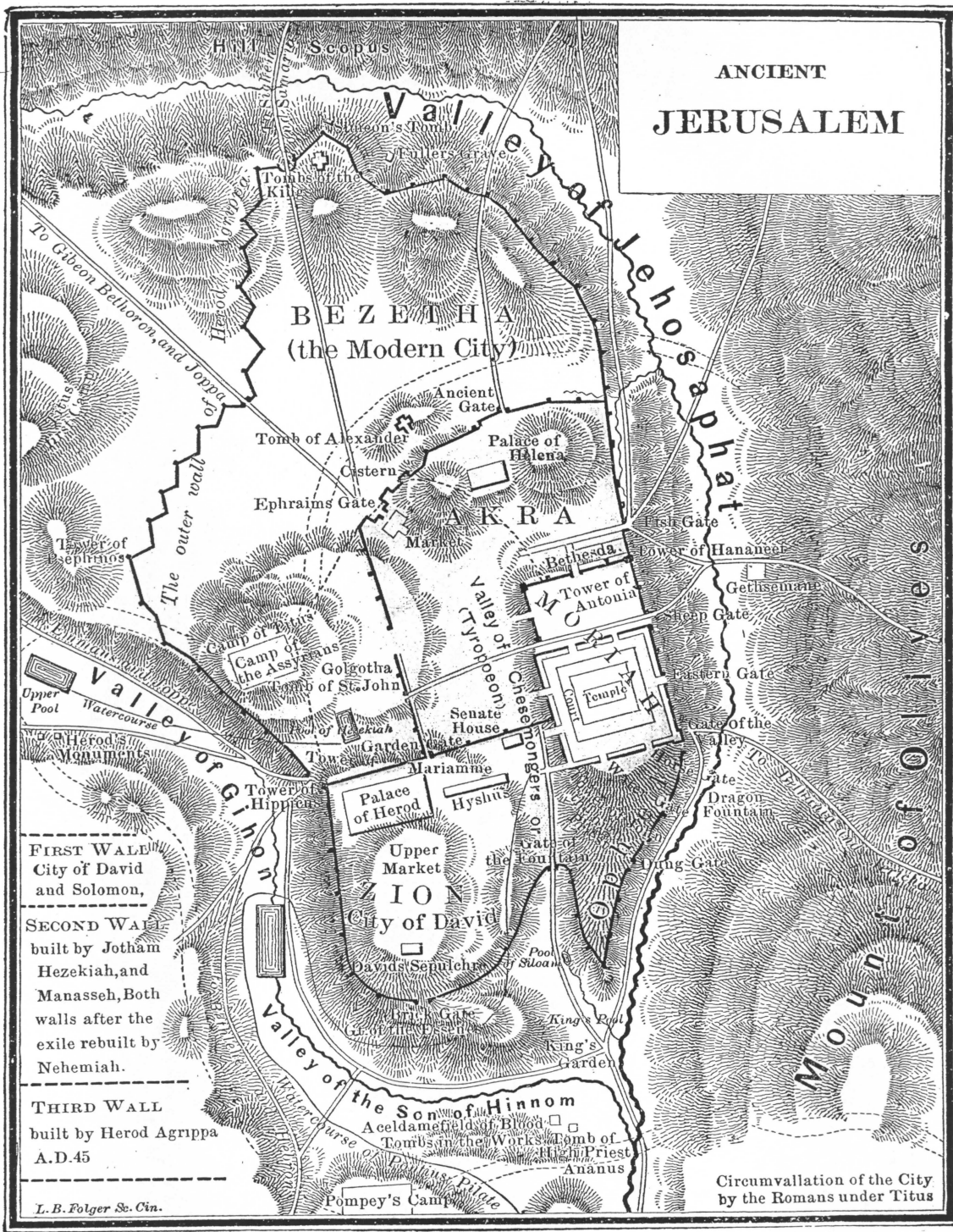
Plan von Jerusalem.

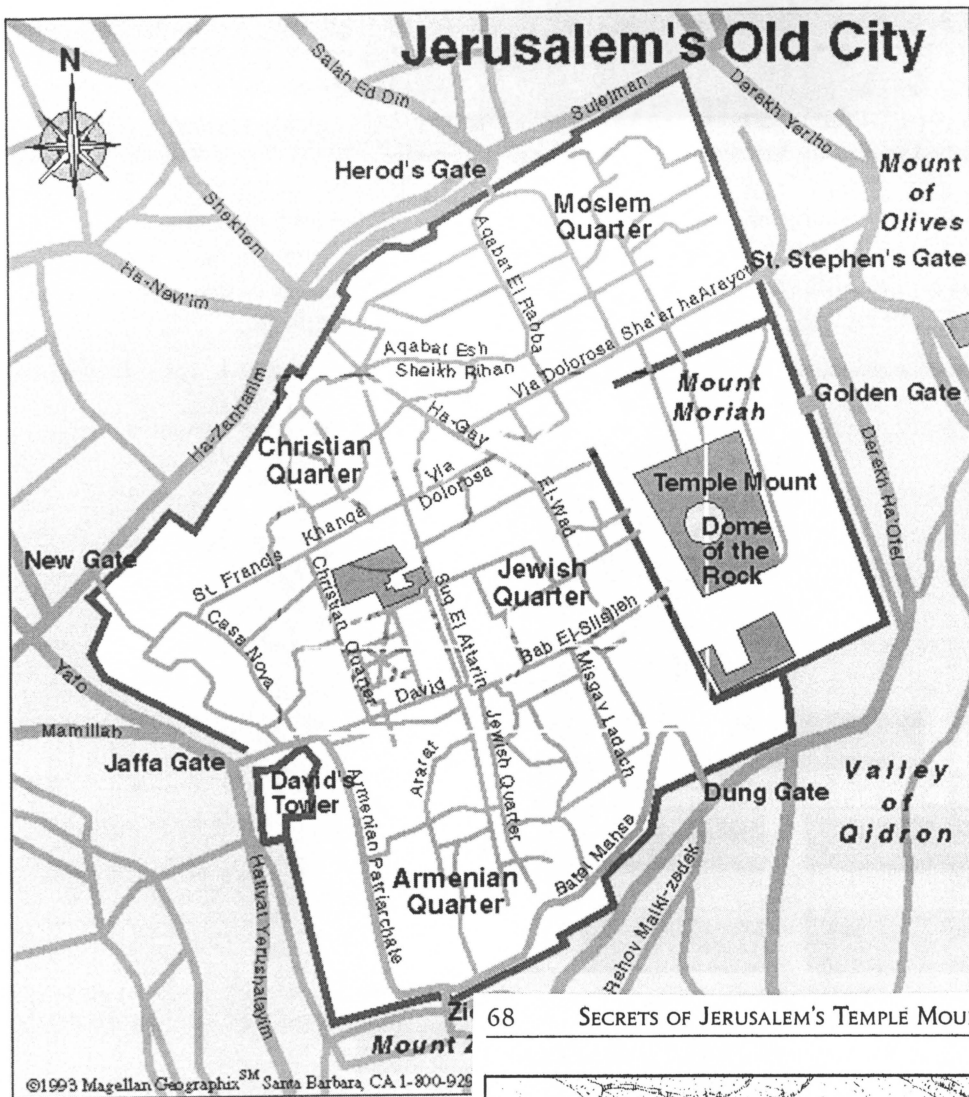


PLAN OF JERUSALEM.

1. Mount Zion. 2. Moriah. 3. The Temple. 4. Antonia. 5. Probable site of Golgotha.
6. Ophel. 7. Bezetha. 8. Church of the Holy Sepulchre. 9, 10. The Upper and Lower Pools of Gihon. 11. Enrogel. 12. Pool of Hezekiah. 13. Fountain of the Virgin. 14. Siloam. 15. Bethesda. 16. Mount of Olives. 17. Gethsemane.

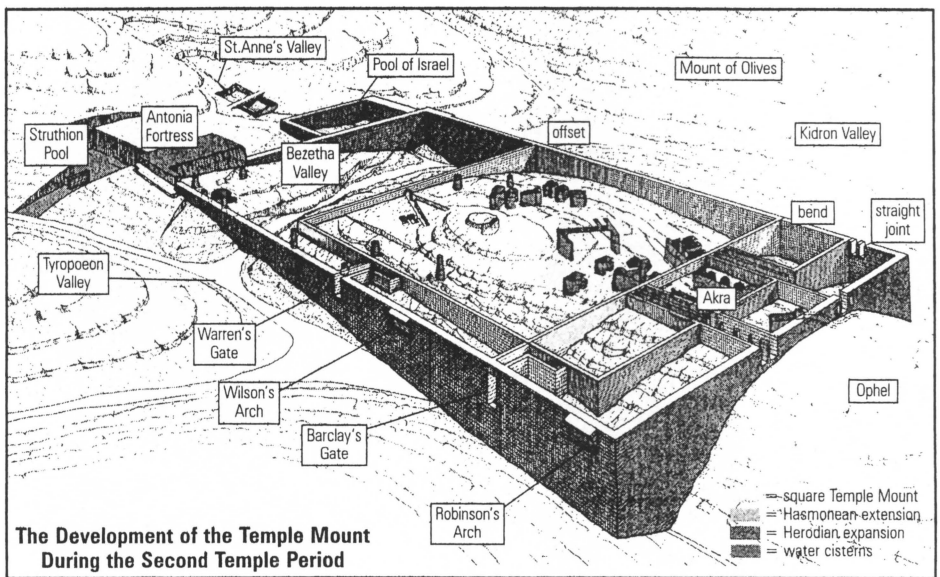
ANCIENT
JERUSALEM





68 SECRETS OF JERUSALEM'S TEMPLE MOUNT

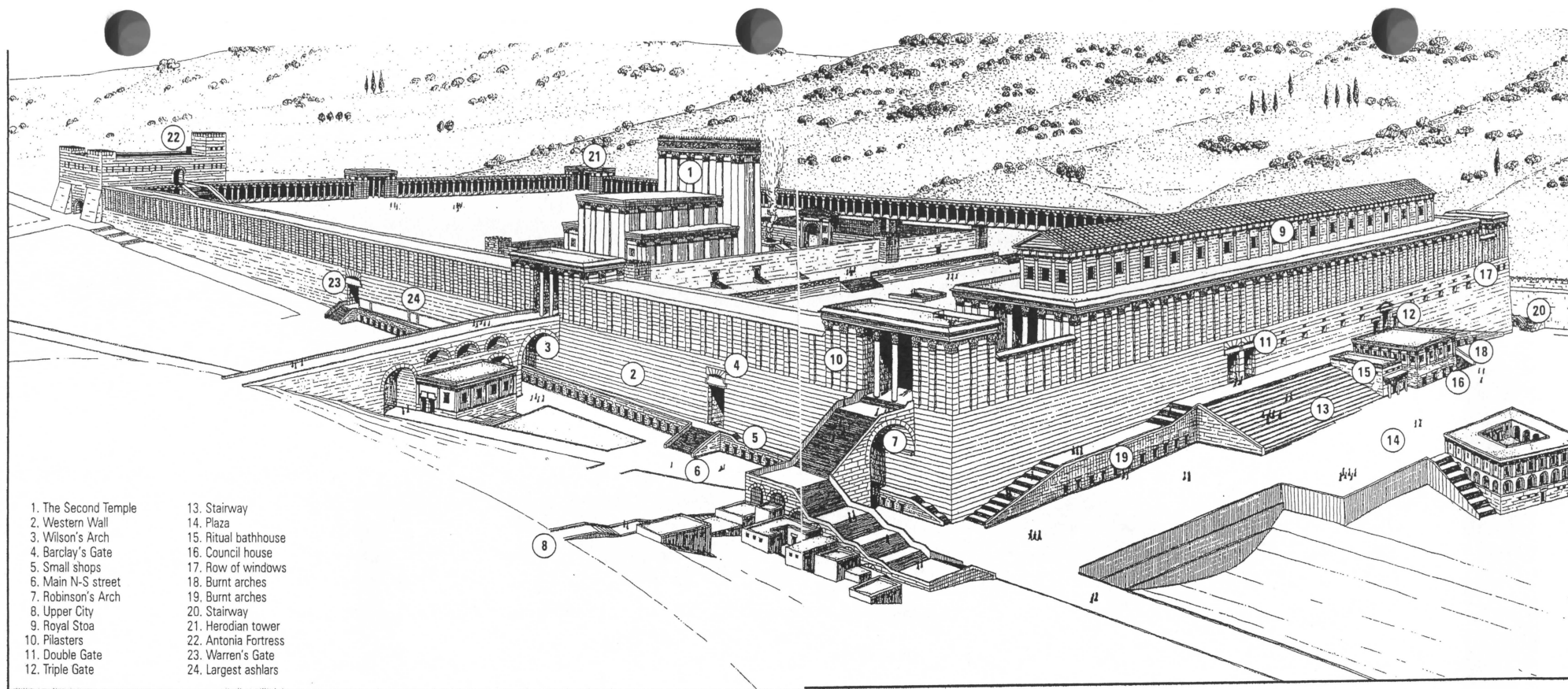
©1993 Magellan Geographix, Santa Barbara, CA 1-800-928



The Development of the Temple Mount During the Second Temple Period

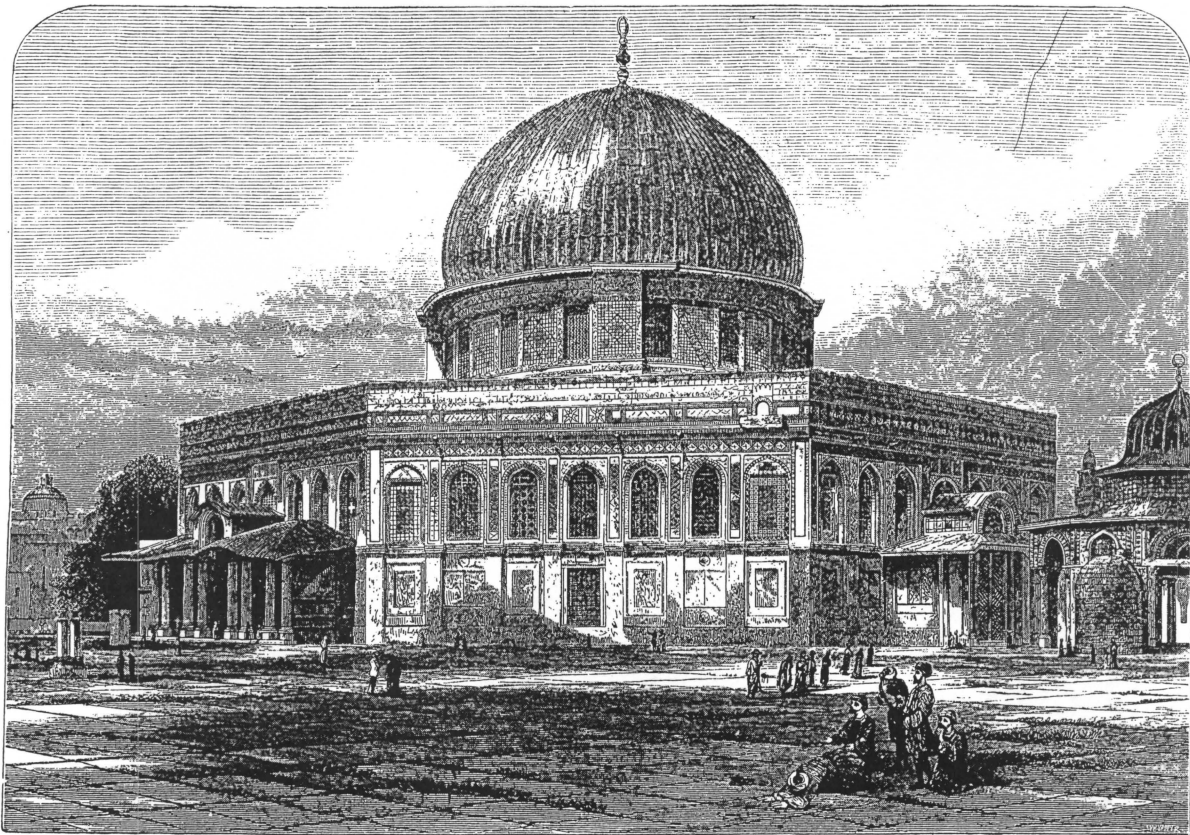
A CUTAWAY LOOK AT THE TEMPLE MOUNT. Combining architectural features from various periods, the underlying topography of the bedrock and cisterns and passageways cut into the bedrock, this drawing shows the Temple Mount's expanding boundaries over time (in practice, older walls would have been covered over or their stones reused elsewhere when new construction took place). Not shown is the surface of the Temple Mount itself or the structures built atop it, most notably the Temple.

At center are the walls of the square Temple Mount of the First Temple period, measuring 500 cubits on each side. Extending to the south is the location of the Seleucid fortress known as the Akra, built in about 186 B.C. The Akra was dismantled in 141 B.C. and a Hasmonean addition was then built across the entire southern side of the previous square Temple Mount. The outermost walls represent the Herodian addition on the south, west and north.

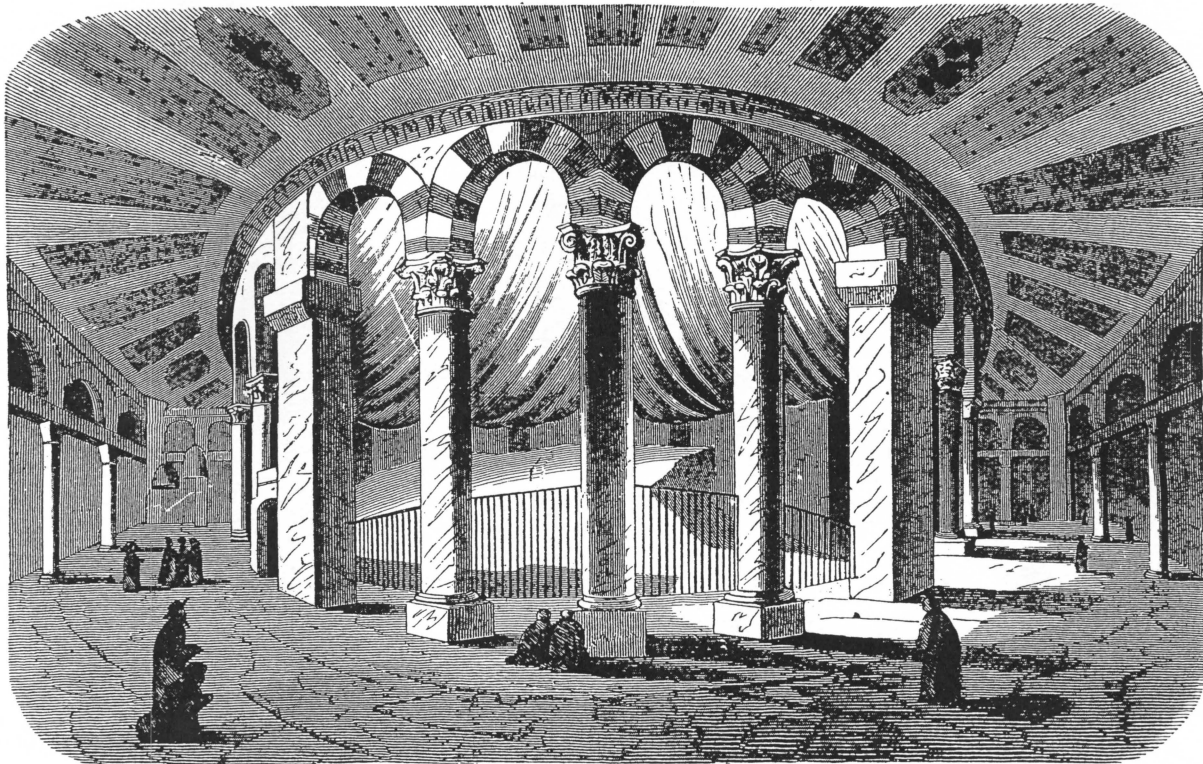


THE TEMPLE MOUNT. When King Herod (37-4 B.C.) rebuilt the Temple (1), he carried out the project on a grandiose scale. Not satisfied with the size of the Temple Mount that Solomon had built, Herod doubled its extent by lengthening the eastern wall, in the background, at each end and by building a new wall on the other three sides. To this he added the monumental stoa (9) along the southern wall, right foreground, a series of gates—some with simple stairways, others adorned with magnificent stairways—and a bridge (3), at left, linking the mount with the Upper City (8). The Antonia Fortress (22), at the far left, was built to guard the Temple Mount's vulnerable northern side, the only side lacking a natural valley that could give protection to the mount.

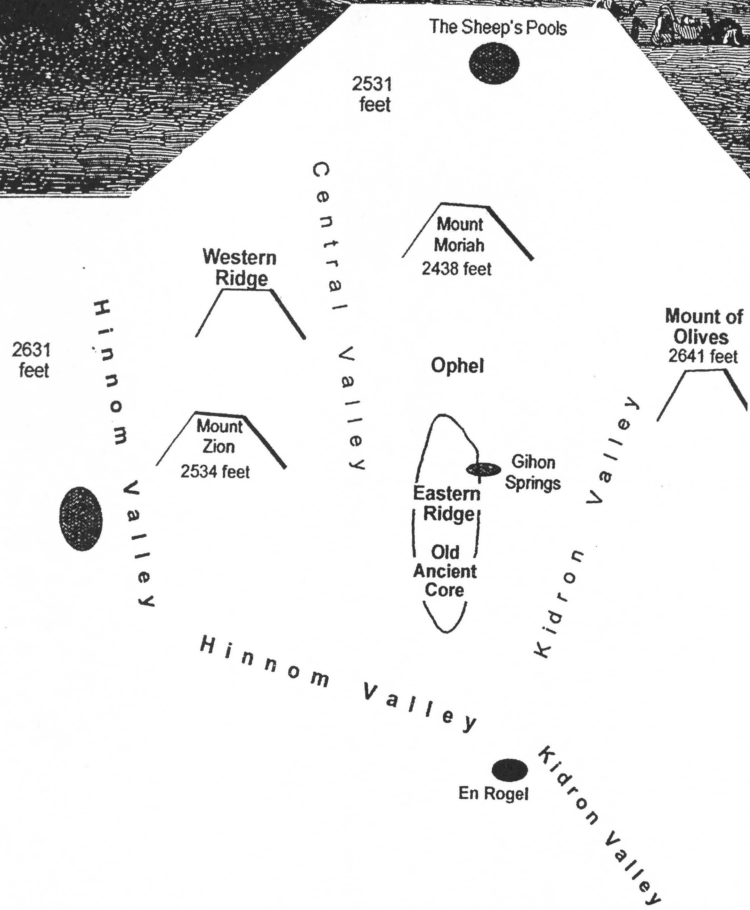
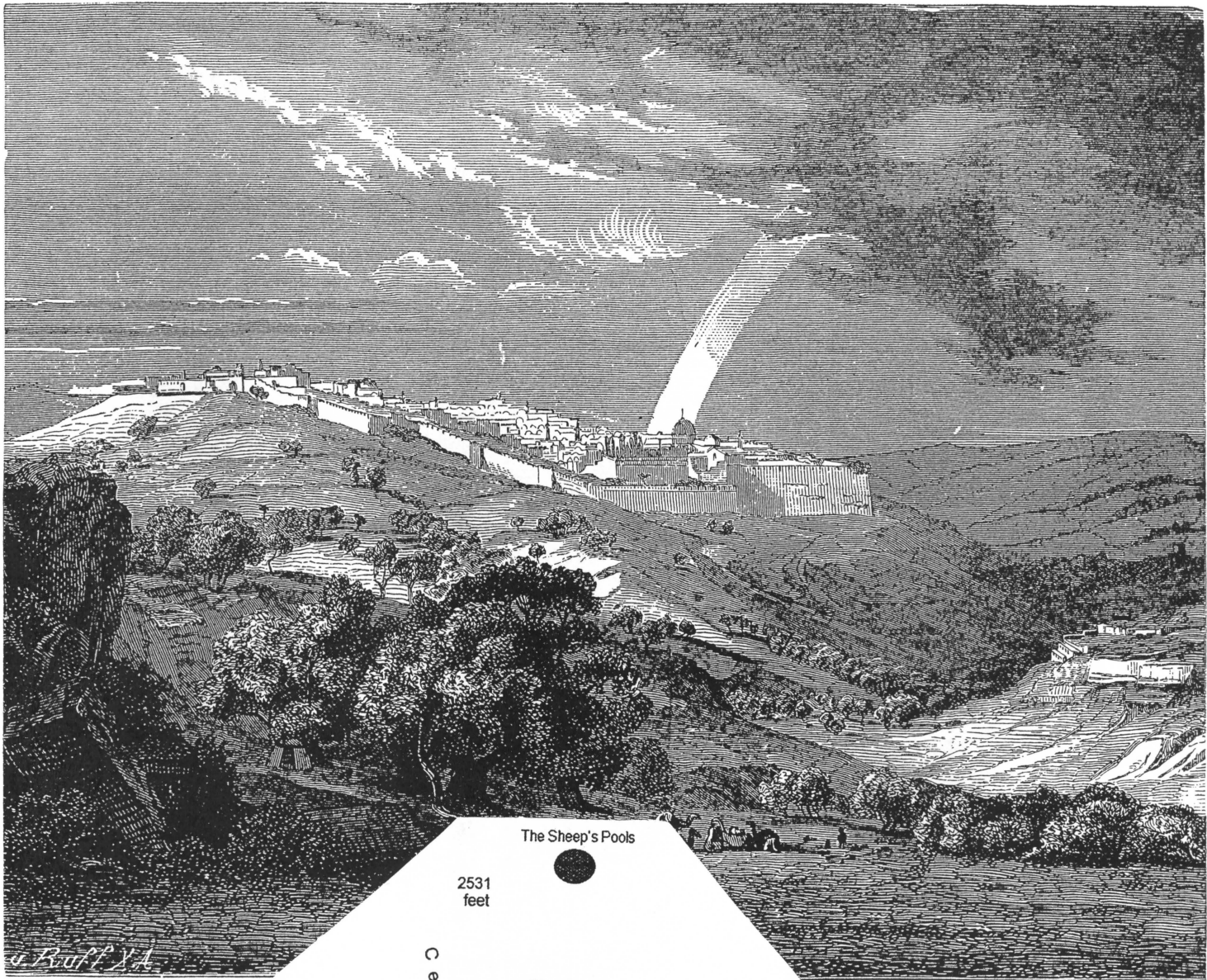
This glimpse at grandeur is the product of painstaking excavations, insightful interpretations and the skilled hand of architect-artist Leen Ritmeyer, who translates the evidence into a vision of the past. Using photos, drawings and words, Ritmeyer and his wife Kathleen conduct the reader on a tour around the wall surrounding the Temple Mount. They employ archaeological and literary evidence to reconstruct the ancient appearance and function of all the major features of the wall and its gateways during the Herodian period. The reconstruction seen here, with the western wall extending to the left and the southern wall extending to the right, can serve as a visual guide to this chapter. Features discussed in the text, and the photos and plans that illustrate them, are keyed by numbers to their locations in this drawing.



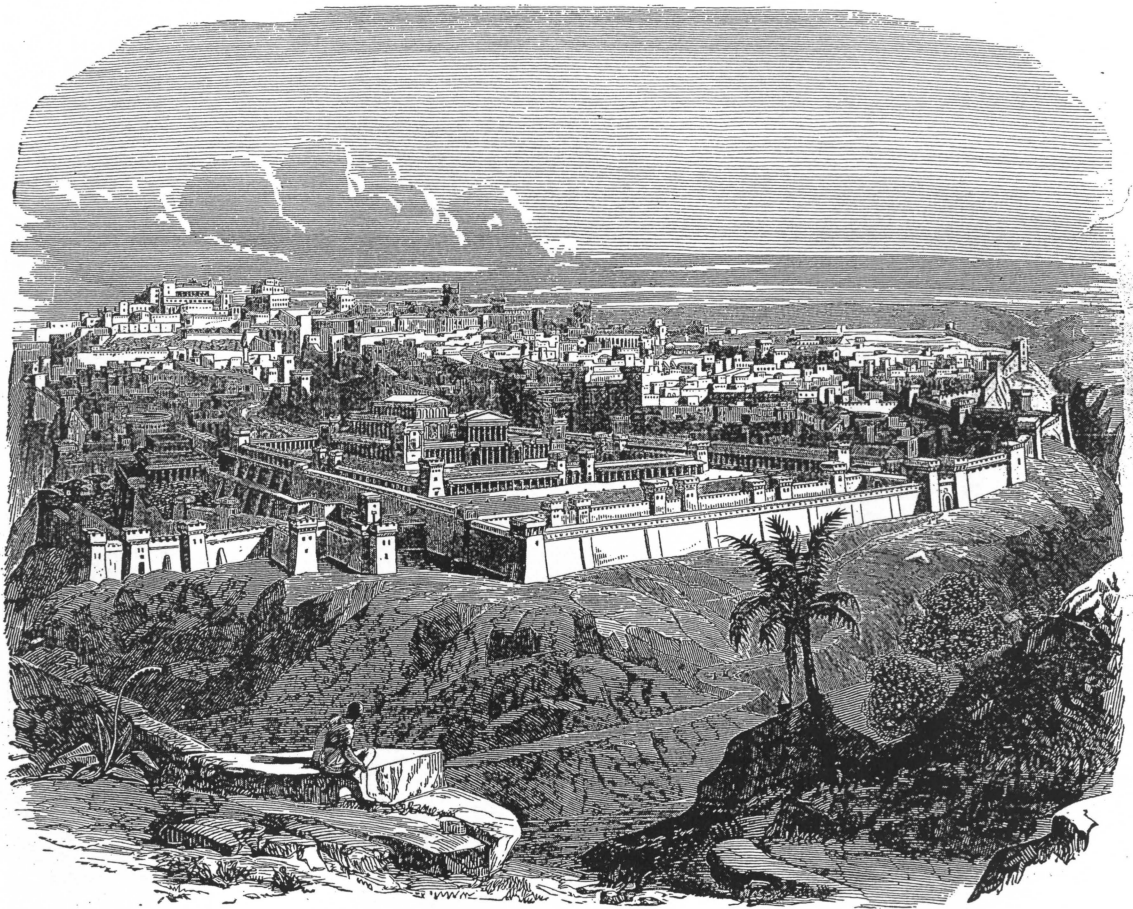
Der Felsendom oder die Omarmoschee.



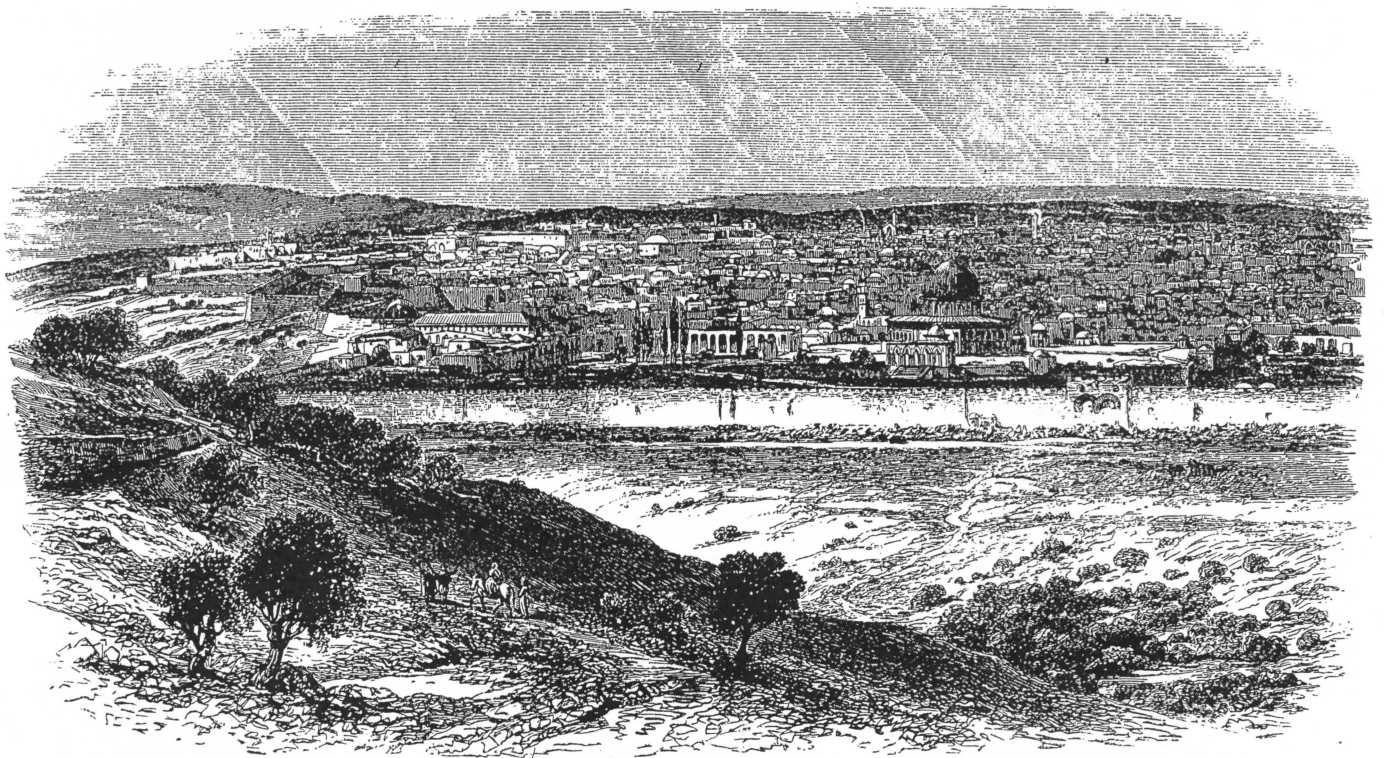
Der heilige Fels (es Sachrà) in der Omarmoschee.



Die Stadt und Umgebung von Jerusalem.



Jerusalem zur Zeit unseres Zeitaldes.



WYMPER SC.

Ein Teil von Jerusalem vom Tiberge aus.

Abraham's Test of Faith: Exegetical Outline of Genesis 22:1-19

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- 9A. The Return to Beersheba: 19



Manfred E. Kober, Ph.D.

3A. THE TEST OF ABRAHAM:

In an old classic volume, unfortunately little-known today, John Kitto describes Bible history and geography. His narrative of the test of Abraham bears reciting here:

The Jewish doctors count up ten trials of Abraham's faith and obedience (1. In quitting his native country, Chaldea; 2. his flight to Egypt from famine in Canaan; 3. the first seizure of Sarah, in Egypt; 4. the war for the rescue of Lot; 5. his taking Hagar to gratify Sarah; 6. his circumcision; 7. the second seizure of Sarah in Gerar; 8. the expulsion of Ishmael; 9. the expulsion of Hagar; 10. the sacrifice of Isaac.) Nine of these we have told. The tenth and last was of all these the most terrible, and from which, proportionably, the character of the patriarch came forth with the greater splendour—with the resplendence of gold refined in many fires. He had dwelt many years in Beersheba, and his son Isaac had reached the age of twenty-five years, when the astounding command came, that he was to immolate this son—the heir of the promise—as a sacrifice to Jehovah. It being the design of God to render the patriarch an eminent example to all his future posterity of unquestioning obedience, whereby he might worthily claim the title of "The Father of the Faithful," every circumstance was accumulated which seemed calculated to render obedience more difficult to him. Even in the requirement itself, the proposed victim is indicated by a variety of tender appellations, rising in their value by an admirable climax from the first to the last, every one of which must have entered like iron into the soul of the patriarch: "Take now *thy son*, thine *only son*, whom *thou lovest*, ISAAC—and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I shall tell thee."

We do not imagine that the idea of a father sacrificing his son to God as a burnt-offering was new to Abraham. In after times we know it was but too common; and it appears probable that in those times which lie beyond the reach of our knowledge, the notion had crept in, that the life of a son, and especially of the eldest, the only, or of a very dear son, was the most valuable and precious offering in their power to present, it must needs be the most acceptable and meritorious in the eyes of the gods they worshipped. Hence, as the most sensible of the Jewish writers conjecture, Abraham understood that this highest sacrifice by which, as he knew, the heathen manifested their zeal for their false gods, was required of him as a test of his zeal for the true God. But how he could reconcile such a command with the promise of a numerous posterity through this very Isaac might not appear very evident, did we not learn from the New Testament, that so confident did he feel that this promise would and must be accomplished, that he believed that God would restore Isaac again to life after he was sacrificed. Curbing, therefore, the force of his paternal emotions, he, with the usual alacrity of his obedience, "rose early in the morning," and made the necessary preparations for the journey and for



the sacrifice, directing the ass on which he usually rode to be saddled, and the wood required for a burnt-offering to be cleaved. He then departed with Isaac, attended by two of his young men. On the third day they arrived within a distant view of the place, which God had appointed for this awful act; and it proved to be that Mount Moriah on which, in after ages, the temple of Solomon was built; and this site was probably selected with a prospective reference to that circumstance, as well as to the mysteries of which the neighbourhood was to be the scene in ages to come.

Here, while the place was still some way off, Abraham alighted from his ass, and fearing lest the young men might be disposed to interfere, or perhaps, apprehending that the act which he was about to execute might, through such witnesses, be drawn into a precedent, he directed them to remain there with the ass, while he and Isaac went yonder to worship. The father and son passed on in silence, Isaac bearing the wood which, unknown to him, was destined to consume his own body, and Abraham taking the knife and a vessel containing the fire with which the wood was to be kindled. As they thus proceeded, it occurred to Isaac to ask the natural but, under the circumstances, very trying question,—“My father, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?” To this Abraham only answered, “God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering, my son.” But as they proceeded, or when they arrived at the top of the hill, the patriarch must have explained to his son the he was himself the victim which God had provided; and that the pious and dutiful youth then bowed in submission to the will of God and the desire of his father, is evinced by the circumstances: for any act of compulsion was morally impossible by an old man of 125 years upon a vigorous youth of 25 years, whose strength is evinced by his ability to carry all the wood required for such a sacrifice; and his submission must have been founded on the conviction that his father was right in that which he was doing. The altar was built; the wood was disposed properly upon it; Isaac laid himself down upon the wood; and lest the weakness of the flesh should shrink in this fiery trial, he submitted to be bound: and then the patriarch—with feelings which a fond father can understand without any description, and which none else would understand if described—lifted up his hand to smite the life which was doubtless far more precious to him than his own. The trial was complete. The uplifted arm was arrested, and the intense feelings of that solemn moment were calmed in an instant by a most welcome voice from heaven, which cried: “Abraham! Abraham! lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: *for NOW I KNOW that thou fearest God, seeing that thou hast not withheld thy son—thy only son—from Me.*” And as the patriarch heard these words, his eyes fell upon a ram which had been caught in a thicket by its horns, and joyfully recognizing in this the victim which God *had provided* for a burnt-offering, he hastened to offer it on the altar in the place of his own son Isaac; and never, surely, from the beginning of the world till now, was a religious act performed with such released feelings as those which attended this sacrifice. In memory of this event, and with a happy allusion to his own ambiguous answer to the question of Isaac, as well as to its most unexpected accomplishment, he called the name of that place JAHOH JIRE—*the Lord will provide.*

This act of perfect obedience being consummated, it pleased God to reward the faith he had thus proved, and not found wanting, by the renewal of all his former promises, in terms so express and so strong, and confirmed by the highest of all possible sanctions—“BY MYSELF I have sworn,”—that the patriarch could not but receive it as a firm and settled matter; and hence it does not appear that any further promise was made to him during the remainder of his life. Cheered by this promise, Abraham returned happily to Beersheba with his son, whom he had, as it were, received again from the dead, and who must now have become all the dearer to him, for the signal proof he had given of his pious resignation and filial piety.

John Kitto, *Palestine: The Bible History of the Holy Land*. London: Charles Knight and Co., 1841, 62-64.

4A. THE TRUTH FOR THE BELIEVER TODAY:

1b. The glorification of Almighty God:

C. H. Mackintosh, a gifted Brethren writer in the mid-1850s, shows the spiritual ramifications of Abraham's test:

There was not a scene in Abraham's entire history in which God was so much glorified as the scene on Mount Moriah. There it was that he was enabled to bear testimony to the fact that he had found all his fresh springs in God—found them not merely previous to, but after, Isaac's birth. This is a most touching point. It is one thing to rest in God's blessings, and another thing to rest in Himself: it is one thing to trust God when I have before my eyes the channel through which the blessing is to flow, and quite another thing to trust Him when that channel is entirely stopped up. This was what proved the excellency of Abraham's faith.

2b. The dedication of Abraham:

Mackintosh continues:

Have I such a simple view of God's sufficiency as to be able as it were, to "stretch forth my hand and take the knife to slay my son?" Abraham was enabled to do this, because his eye rested on the God of resurrection—"he accounted that God was able to raise him up even from the dead". . . Faith is always proved by action, and the fear of God by the fruits which flow from it. "Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he had offered Isaac his son on the altar?" (James ii.21) Who could think of calling his faith into question? Take away faith, and Abraham appears on Moriah as a murderer and a madman: take faith into account, and he appears as a devoted worshiper—a God-fearing, justified man. But faith must be proved.

C. H. Mackintosh, *Notes on the Book of Genesis*. New York: Loizeaux Brothers, 1959, 230-233.

3b. An illustration of the atonement:

The spiritually discerning believer realizes immediately that in the narrative which finds culmination on Mount Moriah, Abraham is a type of the heavenly Father and Isaac is a type of Christ.

Pastor Will Pounds, in a fine sermon on Genesis 22:1-19: "Isaac's Substitute Lamb" noted the spiritual parallelism between Abraham about to sacrifice his son and God the Father indeed giving His Son as our sacrifice for sins.

The key to Genesis 22 is the fact that "Abraham accounted that God was able to raise Isaac back from the dead." Abraham trusted God believing he would see God perform a miracle and raise Isaac from the dead. The son must live or God would be found a liar. There is no contradiction in God. The one, clear, logical conclusion is that God is going to raise Isaac from the dead.

The Puritan theologian John Owen wrote: "The ultimate object of Abraham's faith was the power of God. Abraham firmly believed. . . the resurrection from the dead." This "was we see clearly from what is said of him in this text. Abraham still firmly believed the accomplishment of the great promise, although he could not discern the way whereby it

would be fulfilled. Abraham reasoned within himself as to how the power of God would fulfill the promise, and he accounted that if there were no other way, yet after he had slain Isaac, and burnt him to ashes, God could raise him again from the dead."

From that experience, Abraham had a clearer understanding of God's eternal plan of redemption. In the substitutionary ram was prefigured the work of the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world. Abraham's experience foreshadowed Christ's atoning death and anticipated His victorious resurrection.

Hebrews 11:19 tells us Abraham "considered that God is able to raise people even from the dead, from which he also received him back as a type." The author of Hebrews regarded the incident as a "type" (*en parabole*) of the violent death and resurrection of Christ. The sacrifice of Isaac was a type of our Lord's crucifixion. This ancient patriarch's faith was able to reach the wonderful heights of the resurrection and for this reason Isaac was restored to him as one from the dead. Isaac was as a type of the death and resurrection of the Son of God who was not spared His life (cf. Rom. 8:32; Jn. 8:56).

(<http://www.abideinchrist.com/messages/gen22v8.html> (accessed August 30, 2012))



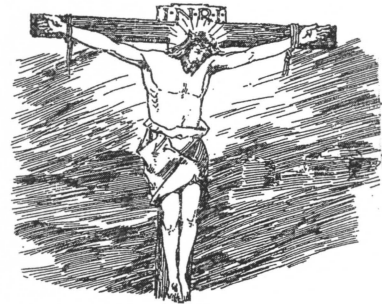
An Important Lesson for Us Today

THE SON (_____) WAS SILENT BEFORE THE FATHER (_____) AND THE FATHER SILENT BEFORE GOD.

THE SON (_____) WAS SUBMISSIVE TO THE FATHER (_____) AND THE FATHER SUBMISSIVE TO GOD.

In this, Abraham and Isaac are _____ of Christ.

Christ was silent before and submissive to His heavenly Father as the sacrifice for our sins.



Isaiah 53:7

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth:
He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers
is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

When God expects something of us which we are unable to understand, do we ask, "Why?" or "Why me, God?" or do we trust in His kindness and wisdom and remain **silent** and **submissive**?

It is good to remember the comforting dictum of Robert Thomas Ketcham:

Your heavenly Father is too good to be unkind and too wise to make mistakes.